(b) There is no regional imbalance in taking up gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu.

(c) and (d) On Madurai-Rameswaram (161 kms) gauge conversion project, Madurai-Manamadurai (48 kms) section has already been completed and work on Manamadurai-Mandapam section is targeted for completion during 2005-06. Line between Mandapam and Rameswaram is proposed to be converted to broad gauge. However, no time frame has been fixed for conversion of this section.

On Tiruchchirappalli-Manamadurai (150 kms) gauge conversion project, work on Tiruchchirappalli-Pudukottai (52 kms) section is targeted for completion during 2005-06 and the remaining section will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Train accidents

413. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of accidents which have taken place during the last two years inspite of various ways and means suggested by Committees appointed by Government from time to time;

(b) whether the recommendations/suggestions made have been implemented;

(c) the reasons for the accidents/mishaps taken place; and

(d) the steps taken or likely to be taken by Government to prevent accidents/mishaps in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The number of consequential train accidents

during the years 2003-04 and 2004-05, and causes thereof, are as under:—

Cause of Accidents	2003-2004	2004-2005*
Number of Accidents	325	234
Failure of Railway Staff	161	135
Failure of Other than Railway Staff	107	75
Equipment Failure	18	2
Sabotage	18	7
Incidental	17	15
Cause not established	2	—
Combination of factors	2	—

('Figures are provisional)

Safety is the prime concern of Indian Railways and the monitoring and review of the safety performance is a continuous exercise. Suitable remedial steps, as warranted, are also undertaken. The Railway Safety Review Committee (RSRC)-1998, in its report made a total of 278 recommendations, of which 240 have been accepted/partially accepted. 167 of these have been already implemented upto October 2005, and the remaining are at various stages of implementation.

Other measures undertaken to prevent train accidents include adoption of suitable modern technologies for interlocking and signaling systems, upgradation of standards of track and rolling stock, modernization of maintenance practices, checks on observance of safety precautions and provisions of Anti Collision Device. A corporate safety plan (2003—13) has been drawn up and is being followed.

Execution of new rail lines in Tamil Nadu

414. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about a dozen of new railway lines pertaining to Tamil Nadu for which surveys have been completed since 1997-98 have not been taken up for execution;